

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands
January 17, 2023

President Biden. Well, Mr. Prime Minister, it's great to see you again. We've been in many, many meetings together, but it's good to have you here in the Oval Office.

And you're welcome despite—despite—the World Cup match.

Prime Minister Rutte. Yes, sorry. [Laughter]

President Biden. And in spite of that, you know, you're one of our strongest allies and personal friends, and you've been a great, great personal ally as well. And together, we're stepping up our protection for democratic values across the world. And we're—you know, including standing strong with Ukraine.

Prime Minister Rutte. Yes.

President Biden. And you've been very, very stalwart. And we look to you as well to make sure we have a coherent European response—all Europe—in response to Ukraine.

And Russia is just continuing to act in ways that are almost unbelievable, the brutality with which they're acting.

Together, we're promoting human rights and the rule of law, and we're going to be cohosting the next summit on the—the Summit of Democracies in March, which we'll be together again. And there's a lot that we have to work on together.

And together, we're working on how to keep a free and open Indo-Pacific and, quite frankly, meet the challenges of China. Simply put, our companies—our countries have been, so far, in just lockstep in what we've done and our vision for the future.

And so today I look forward to discussing how we can further deepen our relationship and securing our supply chains to strengthen our transatlantic partnership.

And thank you again, Mr. Minister. We've had a great relationship with both our countries and personally. And I look forward to discussing a lot more in detail.

Prime Minister Rutte. Thank you. Thank you so much. And also, thank you for hosting me. It's the first time in my——

President Biden. The fire.

Prime Minister Rutte. ——five visits that the fireplace——

President Biden. That's right. The fireplace.

Prime Minister Rutte. ——is on.

And typically, I would start with the economy. And then I would have told the press that we are the second biggest investor in the U.S. and the United States is the biggest investor in Europe.

But I think we should talk Ukraine. And we have seen this terrible footage coming out of Dnipro this weekend, where innocent children, men, and women again were under rocket fire, and this apartment building was hit, and many people died. These are horrible pictures. And I think it—it strengthens even more our resolve to stay with Ukraine.

And I want to commend you personally and the United States for your leadership. I'm convinced that history will judge that in 2022, if the United States would not have stepped up like

you did, that things would have been very different at the moment in this—in the fight between Ukraine and Russian aggression.

And we have decided to spend another 2½ billion on——

President Biden. Yes.

Prime Minister Rutte. ——helping the Ukraine war effort. If you compare this to the size of America, it would be over \$50 billion—\$50 billion.

We have the intention to join what you are doing with Germany on the Patriots project, so the air defense system. I think that is important that we join that. I discussed it also, this morning, with Olaf Scholz of Germany.

And then, on accountability, we can never accept that Putin and Russia get away with this. So, accountability to take them to court to make sure that this all gets done in—also in a legal way is crucial. And I know that you and I are working on this.

But again, your leadership—United States, you personally—has been crucial. So, again, I want to thank you for that. And let's stay closely together this year. And hopefully, things will move—yes—forward in a way which is acceptable for Ukraine. They have done so much. And this year will be important.

So, again, thank you.

President Biden. They have. And one of the things—if I could just add very quickly: Europe continues to step up, respond to Russian actions. There's more to do, and we have to stay together. And it's been really, really, really important that you've been there every single step of the way. So thank you.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:39 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, Prime Minister Rutte referred to Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia.

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